NOTICE TO SURVEYORS T4/2003

RURAL ROAD DEDICATIONS AND THE NON-EXTINGUISHMENT OF NATIVE TITLE

Subdivision K of the *Native Title Act* 1993 (NTA) deals with the provision of facilities to the public and allows for the non-extinguishment of native title. In the past, DOLA has not used this particular Subdivision of the NTA because it deals with the construction of public facilities and not the granting of title. Road dedications have been processed under the public works provisions of the NTA as a compulsory acquisition.

About eighteen months ago, the Government convened a Technical Taskforce to consider native title procedures for processing mining tenements and land titles. The Taskforce comprised of mining interest groups, native title representative bodies and government agencies such as DMPR, Premier and Cabinet, and DOLA. The Technical Taskforce has completed its report and it's recommendations are being considered by the Government. The recommendations on land titles generally call for greater use of Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) and of the non-extinguishment principle. More specifically, it calls for greater use of the non-extinguishment principle under Subdivision K.

In support of the Technical Taskforce recommendations DOLA is commencing to use Subdivision K of the NTA and the non-extinguishment principle for rural road dedications.

The non-extinguishment principle has been part of the NTA since the Act came into operation on 1/1/1994. Its main application lies within the mining industry where prospecting and exploration permits over Crown land are subject to the non-extinguishment principle. This means that during the currency of a permit, native title exists but is suppressed, and the rights held (the permit) take precedence. Once the permit expires, native title re-asserts itself and takes precedence. The same would now apply to road dedications. While the road is dedicated, native title would exist but the public's right to use the road and the ability for authorities to maintain the road would take precedence. Once the road, or portion of it, is closed it reverts to unallocated Crown land, native title re-asserts itself and takes precedence.

The attached plan example indicates how the non-extinguishment principle is to be depicted on deposited plans, within the Interests and Notifications schedule. Where a specific native title holder exists they should be shown in the "Benefit To" column.

IAN HYDE REGISTRAR OF TITLES

